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**RANCHO CORDOVA DEBIT CARD SKIMMER SENTENCED TO  
41 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

SACRAMENTO --United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that FARRELL MAHARAJ, 23, of Sacramento was sentenced today by United States District Judge Lawrence K. Karlton to 41 months in federal prison. On April 20, 2007, the defendant pleaded guilty to access device fraud for skimming the debit card numbers of gas station customers.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the United States Secret Service.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Matthew D. Segal, who prosecuted the case, MAHARAJ caused \$335,788.25 in actual loss from bank accounts linked to skimmed debit cards. Between April and July of 2006, the defendant worked as a cashier at a Rancho Cordova gas station. Bank investigators noticed that starting in April 2006, a large number of debit cards that had first been used at the gas station were subsequently used for unauthorized ATM withdrawals. On July 13, 2006, United States Secret Service agents went to the gas station at a time that the defendant was operating the cash register and made purchases using debit cards. They saw MAHARAJ swipe their cards first through the cash register and then, surreptitiously, through his left hand. The Secret Service agents also saw MAHARAJ watch them input their card PIN numbers and then enter numbers on his cellular telephone. The defendant was searched and arrested. He had in his possession a handheld magnetic card reader that had on it 177 debit card numbers.

At sentencing, it was revealed that MAHARAJ had been giving skimmed ATM card data to Mourad Suleiman, a defendant who was sentenced by United States District Judge Garland E. Burrell on June 5, 2007 in a similar skimming case to 57 months in prison. MAHARAJ faces possible deportation to Fiji after he finishes his prison term.

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